

Isaiah 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

Analysis

The contrasting 'woe unto the wicked' establishes the principle of divine retribution. The parallelism with verse 10 emphasizes individual accountability—each person receives according to their deeds. The phrase 'given him' indicates divine justice ensures appropriate consequences. This dual outcome (blessing/curse) reflects the covenant structure Moses established (Deuteronomy 28-30).

Historical Context

Ancient covenant structures always included blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. Isaiah applies this pattern individually, not just corporately, emphasizing personal faith's importance.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does certainty about future judgment motivate present faithfulness?
2. What does it mean that Christ bore the 'reward of His hands' that should have fallen on believers?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֶּה אָוֹת
Woe unto the wicked: it shall be ill with him for the reward of his hands
H188 H7563 H7451 H3588 H1576 H3027

שָׁהֵם יְלִיכָה
shall be given H0
H6213

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 8:13 (Evil): But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.

Psalms 28:4 (Evil): Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

Psalms 62:12 (Parallel theme): Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

James 2:13 (Parallel theme): For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Isaiah 48:22 (Evil): There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

Isaiah 65:20 (Parallel theme): There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

Proverbs 1:31 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (Parallel theme): For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

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